SECONDARY EDUCATION ACTIVITY
АКТИВНОСТИ ВО СРЕДНОТО ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ

SEA PROJECT
SECONDARY EDUCATION ACTIVITY

MODULE 3
LEARNING THROUGH COMMUNITY

Teacher Development Component

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MODULE 3

Learning Through Community

C o n t e n t s

I. PURPOSE OF THE MODULE

Introduction

As schools have become more centralized, they have increasingly become more distant from their local community, weakening the vital links between experience, work, and education. As a result, schools in many rural and urban communities have lost their influence as a valuable community resource and communities have begun to struggle without needed contributions from the schools. Clearly we need to create a new kind of partnership in which both schools and communities contribute directly to mutual strengthening and development. To achieve this goal, creative educators and innovative community builders must begin to work together to discover new ways to mobilize the various resources of local schools as essential components of continuing community development efforts. Each school should be seen not only as an educational institution, but also as a rich and specific resource that can be used for social and economic community strengthening.

This Module gives vocational education and creative educators opportunities to reconnect their institution with local community building alliances that recognize that healthy schools and healthy communities reinforce each other. Both school officials and community leaders must realize they share important values, interests, and goals and can base a strong and lasting alliance on these commonalities. Community leaders and school officials must both understand that

- healthy communities produce and support educational excellence, and
- good schools are the best guarantee for a community's future (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1997).

1. Why is this topic generally important?

Learning through the community helps young people develop into involved citizens. Through their involvement in community affairs new relationships between students, teachers, and citizens can be fostered, enabling youths and adults to learn from many segments of their community and open them to an unlimited set of resources for support and growth. These principles relate to the changing nature of society, the learner, the learning process, and sources of learning. Critical assumptions that serve as a foundation for learning through communities are:

- Education must be viewed as a continuum from preschool through lifelong education for adults.
- Learning is what we do for ourselves. Therefore it requires the full involvement of the learner as well as the teacher/mentor.
- Jobs in the future will require not only more education, but different types of education such as critical thinking, teamwork, and ability to apply knowledge.
- Problems affecting learners today are much broader than schools can solve alone. Involvement of the family, business, labor, the community, and others is essential.

Helping the schools and communities to observe the need for change and to feel empowered to guide these changes is an important challenge encountered by new leadership in education (School Improvement Research Series: Community-Based Learning).

2. *How does the approach from this module compare and contrast with traditional perspectives?*

Learning goals for students are changing. While students are still expected to learn important facts, there is growing emphasis on applying facts to problem solving. In addition to learning traditional subject areas, students must think critically, collaborate with others, and integrate what they learn across subjects. As the content of what is to be learned changes, the methodologies of both, learning and teaching, must adjust (School Improvement Research Series: Community-Based Learning).

This module's approach differs from traditional teaching methods in several ways. It increases teamwork among students, teachers, and community members who exchange information and discuss issues of common concern. Also, it provides students with opportunities for experiential learning, not just classroom learning, and increases the relevance of classroom activities through "learning by doing."

3. *How does this topic fit within a quality improvement framework?*

Community-based learning is a broad set of teaching/learning strategies that enable youth and adults to learn what they want to learn from any segment of the community. Community-based learning includes service-learning, experiential learning, School-to-Work, youth apprenticeship, lifelong learning, cooperative education, and experience-based career education.

These strategies promote a learning approach through which student apply academic and vocational skills and knowledge to address real life/work situations, developing attitudes, values, and behaviors that will help them to become informed citizens and productive workers.

Community-based learning involves students in the solution of the authentic problems of the community. engaging them in critical analysis and reflection, developing their skills for understanding and resolving various issues within their situational context.

As students work through the unstructured problems exemplified in real life, they have the opportunity to improve their capacity for critical thinking and problem solving, and they become more able to engage in career planning and progression.

Community-based learning also fosters preemployment skills and job readiness, and, as such, is an excellent focus for vocational education. Sileox (1995) contends that "vocational education should prepare students with a business/community-based approach, in particular in view of the current emphasis on outcome-based education, which favors apprenticeship models over classroom models". Through placements in public and private, profit and nonprofit sectors of the business community, students are positioned to realize many of goals of apprenticeship work (Service Learning: More than Community Service).

Self-confidence, competence, and empathy for others are some of the personal benefits students realize through community-based learning. Additionally, by engaging in problem solving and by working cooperatively and collaboratively with others, students are able to build skills needed for employment in today's workplace (Service Learning: More than Community Service).

4. What are the key practical skills and competences expected from participation in this module?

Module 3 (Learning through Community) examines various ways in which schools and youth can effectively connect with their potential partners in the community. Participants will recognize how to create a new kind of partnership in which both schools and communities contribute directly to the strengthening and development of each other. This

Module attempts to promote understanding that learning through community offers strategies for involvement of young people in addressing the problems of their communities. Students with ideas, energy, and idealism can become important actors through classes, projects and internships, which involve them in the local community development process, and they can be essential contributors to the well-being and vitality of the community (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1997).

Teachers who participate in this workshop will:

- acquire a range of skills and competence how to integrate classroom learning with learning through community and how to incorporate new ways of teaching and learning into their own practice;
- become aware that community-based learning makes school relevant to students by connecting academic concepts to real-life applications and makes students active learners who are responsible for their own learning;
- learn how they can improve students skills and attitudes, and capabilities necessary for future work and learning, providing work-like experiences for students, actively engaging them in the production of goods and services (School Improvement Research Series: Community-Based Learning).

II. CHARACTERISTICS AND NEEDS OF THE ADOLESCENT LEARNER

The information in this module is consistent with research on the needs of the adolescent learner. Understanding the needs of the adolescent learner is essential for developing effective instruction.

Adolescents are at a stage of life where they are undergoing many changes. These changes are physical, social, emotional, and intellectual. Piaget (1969) described the progression in cognitive processes as a change from **concrete operations** to **formal operations**, a change from a concrete to an abstract way of thinking about the world.

With their ability to manipulate and understand abstract concepts, adolescents can formulate general rules about the world and then test them against available facts. They can speculate about alternative possibilities, reason in hypothetical terms, and understand analogies and metaphors. However, numerous studies have shown that a sizable percentage of adolescents don't reach the stage of formal operation. As Cowan (1978) points out, because the majority of secondary-school students have not fully reached formal operational thought, it would be a mistake to assume that hypothetical, logical instruction should entirely replace the use of concrete examples and personal experiences. Thus active-learning environments are essential for this age group.

Each youth is a unique individual, yet also a member of one or more groups (Sturtevant and Linek, 2004). For example, each young person is part of a family and may also belong to a club or religious organization. He or she may also identify with other youth who have interests such as dance, woodworking, or electronics. All youth need to learn many new social and academic skills to prepare for the future.

As part of their growth toward adulthood, all adolescents need to consider many life vocations and opportunities. They need to develop skills and attitudes that will help them grow into responsible adult family members, workers in a market economy, and citizens in a democratic society. School programs that help adolescents develop skills in collaboration, communication, problem solving, decision making, self-assessment, critical thinking, research skills, and leadership abilities are very important.

III. DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITY 1

Developing Critical Thinking by Using Expectation/Reaction Guides

Approximate length: 2 hours

Overview:

This chart shows the steps in this lesson and the activities for each section.

SUMMARY OF EXPECTATION/REACTION GUIDE
Phase I: Activate Background Knowledge • **Teacher invites the participants to recall** personal experience on the concept of *community.* • **Participants answer questions** that provoke opinions on this topic. • **Teacher writes responses** on a flip chart.
Phase II: Constructing Meaning • **Introduce Expectation/Reaction Guide** as a means for helping participants to bring all they know and can predict about the topic before reading. • **Display Expectation/Reaction Guide** on an overhead projector and explain how it is designed. • **Distribute copies** of the Expectation/Reaction Guide for reading by the participants. • **Have the participants work individually** on the Expectation/Reaction Guide before reading the text. • **Pair discussion** on the guide's statements. • **Have the participants read** the distributed text. • **Have the participants work individually** on the Expectation/Reaction Guide after reading the text. • **Have the participants discuss** changes they made in their responses as a result of the reading.
Phase III: Evaluate and Apply • **Ask participants** to review the process of using the expectation/reaction guide. • **Engage participants in a group discussion** about the benefits of the steps used to complete the expectation/reaction guide, responding to questions in Appendix 1-D. • **Ask participants to compare** this strategy with their own practice.

- **Ask the participants to anticipate** how this technique would work in their own practice.
- **Ask participants to work in content-specific groups to create an** Expectation/Reaction Guide for a reading of their choice.

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Be able to produce expectation/reaction guides.
- Experience and reflect on the following module themes:
  - ✓ Collaboration
  - ✓ Communication
  - ✓ Problem Solving/Decision making
  - ✓ Self-assessment
  - ✓ Critical Thinking
  - ✓ Research
  - ✓ Leadership
- Have a broader understanding of the concept of "community."
- Consider the relationship between schools and communities.

PHASE I: Activating Background Knowledge (20 minutes)

Individual brainstorming (recalling personal experience).

- *Teacher* asks participants to think and write individually for 5 minutes about the concept of "community" They should focus on three questions displayed with a transparency on an overhead projector:
  1. How would they define the term "community?"
  2. What connections do their students have to community?
  3. How does the school connect to community?

- *Participants* respond orally to these questions while the trainer puts responses on a flip chart.
- *Teacher* tells group that sometimes it is valuable for a reader to identify personal opinions and to identify knowledge they have on a topic before they read about it. One way to do this is by using an Expectation-Reaction Guide.

PHASE II: Constructing Meaning (45 minutes)

- *Teacher* displays The Expectation/Reaction Guide (Appendix 1-A) without guiding statements on an overhead projector and shows how the guide is designed, pointing out **guiding statements, agree/disagree options, and space for reasons**
- *Participants* are next given the Expectation/Reaction Guide for the reading "Understanding and Defining Community." (Appendix 1-B)
- P*articipants* read the statements and respond individually by writing on the Guide.
- *Teacher* explains that if the participant believes that a statement is true before they read the selection, s/he places a check mark in the "Agree" column. If s/he believes the statement is false, places a check mark in the "Disagree" column. In each instance the participant offers reasons for their beliefs.
- *Participants* should be prepared to support their view about each statement.
- *Teacher* next asks the participants to take turns reading each of the statements with a partner, indicating if they agree or disagree with the content and discussing what they wrote in the section entitled "Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with

this idea." Explain to participants that they do not have to agree with each other, but it is essential that they understand that there are different points of view. And while they are free to share their thinking and predictions, no one will be pressured to do so.

Note to trainer: you may choose to engage in a whole group discussion.

- Distribute copies of the text to the participants. (Appendix 1-C)
- Ask *participants* to place a check mark in the "After Reading" section, checking "Agree" or "Disagree" depending on whether the information supports or does not support the statement.
- Ask *participants* to complete the section "Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea" in their own words, using the relevant text information for their answers.
- Have *participants* discuss revisions briefly with a partner.
- As a group, discuss what answers participants changed and what additional support they found for their answers in the text.

PHASE III: Evaluating and Applying (25 minutes)

- Note the key concepts and lesson objectives.

Ask the *participants* to recall the steps used for completing the Expectation/Reaction guide. Perhaps begin with a question like:

What were the steps we took for introducing and using the Expectation/Reaction guide?

- Ask the *participants* about the overall benefit of this strategy by using such questions like the following, on a transparency (Appendix 1-D):

  - *How does this strategy help to prepare students for reading?*
  - *How does this strategy contribute to the goal of self-questioning?*
  - *How does this strategy help to encourage engaged reading?*
  - *What is the value of working individually on the questions before reading?*
  - *What is the value of reviewing the questions again after reading?*
  - *What is the value of comparing answers with a partner or group before and after reading?*

- Ask p*articipants* to discuss: What *kind of reading material that will lend itself best to this type of activity?*

  NOTE: The material should have some important concepts and it should challenge some of the students existing ideas and beliefs.

- Ask *participants* the following questions about using the strategy with their students:

  - *Is it possible to use this strategy in your classroom?*
  - *How does this strategy compare to the procedures they currently use when they give students new reading assignments?*
  - *What are the benefits of the strategy compared with your own practice?*

- Guide the discussion further by asking participants to anticipate how will this technique work in their specific subjects.

Guided Practice (30 minutes)

- Organize the participants into groups according to subject areas. Have each group brainstorm an application activity using the technique just demonstrated. Decide on a story, textbook selection, newspaper article, or other material to be restudied.
- Identify the major ideas and concepts in the text.
- Consider participants' experiences that will be supported or challenged by the reading.
- Give participants a blank Expectation/Reaction Guide form to complete for a reading selection of their choice. Allow approximately 40 minutes.
- Call on a spokesperson from each group to present the application activity by summarizing the reading material and sharing the questions.

IV. DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITY 2

Techniques for Interviewing

Approximate Time needed: 2 hrs. 30 minutes

Overview:

SUMMARY OF TECHNIQUES FOR INTERVIEWING
Phase I: Activating Background Knowledge • Teacher explains that in this demonstration activity participants will practice developing interview questions, conducting interviews, and evaluating their own and others' interviewing techniques. This will be in preparation for more extensive uses of interviewing in Modules III and IV. • Teacher discusses experiences participants have had with being interviewed or with interviewing someone else. • Teacher discusses possible purposes for conducting interviews and how these guide the questions that are asked. • Teacher elicits possible uses of interviewing in Macedonian schools from participants and writes them on a transparency.
Phase II: Constructing Meaning • In pairs, participants are asked to brainstorm questions they could use in an informational interview of another teacher or school director. • Teacher elicits the participants' questions and writes them on the chalkboard or flip chart. • Teacher asks whole group to vote on the three questions they want to use in the practice interviews. • Participants write these questions on their Interview Sheet (Appendix 2-A) • Teacher explains to participants that the next step is to conduct an interview. • Teacher asks what participants have noticed about body language used during interviews. • Teacher shares an overview related to teaching students to conduct an informational interview. (Appendix 2-B)
Phase III: Evaluating and Applying • Teacher explains that participants will now have a chance to practice their interviewing skills. • Teacher points out that this activity could be used for training secondary school students before they conduct interviews in their school or community.

- Divide participants into groups of three from different schools.
- Have participants use questions they developed to conduct interviews. Each person will take turns being an interviewer, interviewee, and observer.
- After all have participated in each role, participants will reflect on their groups' interviewing techniques.
- Teacher will debrief with the whole group, asking if they think this strategy would be useful for teaching interviewing in their schools.
- Participants will then work with others in their schools to identify ways interviewing could be included in the curriculum. Each school group will be asked to identify one potential use of interviewing for practical classes and vocational classes in their school.
- The whole group will reconvene to share ideas for application of interviewing.

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Develop and practice interviewing skills.
- Develop and practice active listening skills.
- Engage in a planned, systematic, two-way communication process.
- Be able to implement interviewing as a method of learning.
- Experience and reflect on the following module themes:
  - ✓ Collaboration
  - ✓ Communication
  - ✓ Problem Solving/Decision making
  - ✓ Self-assessment
  - ✓ Critical Thinking
  - ✓ Research
  - ✓ Leadership

PHASE I: Activating Background Knowledge (15 minutes)

1. Teacher explains: "*In this demonstration activity, you will practice developing interview questions, conducting interviews, and evaluating your own and others' interviewing techniques. We are doing this in preparation for more extensive uses of interviewing later in Modules III and IV.*"

2. Teacher asks participants: "*Have you ever been interviewed or interviewed someone?*" Teacher asks for examples and personal experiences. "*What are some purposes of interviews?*" Teacher lists answers on transparency or chart paper.

3. Teacher asks participants: "*What are some possible uses of interviewing techniques in Macedonian secondary schools?*" Teacher should add the following if participants do not mention them: interviewing community members to learn about community activities or history, interviewing school leaders or other students to learn more about the school, interviewing employers in the community to learn about jobs. Teacher lists answers on a transparency or chart paper.

4. Teacher explains to the group: "*In addition to the uses of interviewing we have just listed, secondary students will need to learn to participate in interviews to obtain jobs. This will be practiced in Module IV. Interviewing also can be useful in the workplace. Some jobs, such as newspaper reporter, include interviewing as part of the job.*"

PHASE II: Constructing Meaning (30 minutes)

1. Teacher says: "*first we will develop interview questions to use when interviewing a teacher or principal from another content area. When we conduct an interview, we want to be very clear about our purpose for the interview.*

   "*For today, we are going to conduct interviews with each other* ***to learn more about the interviewed person's perspective on teaching.*** *Please find a partner and brainstorm a few questions that might be interesting to ask in order to learn about someone's perspective on teaching. For example, you might ask: What do you like best/like least about teaching your content area? or What are some ways you would like to use computers in your teaching?*"

   (Teacher should give five minutes for brainstorming, then elicit one question from each partner group and write interview questions on the transparency or chalkboard. Ask partners to give questions that others have not given until all questions are written. Then ask whole group to vote on three questions they wish to use in practice interviews.)

2. Participants write these questions on their Interview Sheet (Appendix 2-A). Note that the format for this is similar to the Double Entry Journal used in Module II.

3. Teacher explains to participants that the next step is to conduct an interview.

4. Teacher shares an overview related to teaching students about conducting an informational interview. (Appendix 2-B).

5. Ask participants if they have ever noticed how body language conveys important information about a person's attitude or feeling about a question you ask them? Have

participants give examples. Emphasize that non-verbal communication is important. For example. interviewers need to maintain eye contact and use a positive tone.

6. Teacher points out the list of additional suggested questions in Appendix 2-C (no transparency is necessary). Note that the questions could easily be modified for use with a community member or potential employer.

PHASE III: Evaluating and Applying (1 hour)

1. In large group:

   a) Teacher explains that participants will now have a chance to practice their interviewing skills.

   b) Teacher points out that this practice activity could be used for training secondary school students before students conduct interviews in their schools or communities.

   c) Divide participants into groups of three. Ask that the three come from different schools so that the interview answers will be new to them.

2. In small groups of three:

   a) Have participants use questions developed earlier to conduct interviews. (Appendix 2-A)

   b) Explain that each person will take turns being an interviewer, interviewee, and observer.

   c) Ask the observers to take notes on all the positive things the interviewer did to make the interview go well. Ask that the notes include non-verbal communication (posture, eye contact, use of hands, and tone) as well as verbal communication.

d) The group should reserve 7 - 8 minutes for each interview, with one person keeping time. After each interview, there will be a five minute reflection during which the observer shares his/her notes, the interviewee comments on what the interviewer did to make him/her feel comfortable and at ease, and the interviewer asks for feedback on what he/she could have done better. In general, be certain that students provide positive comments first and keep all comments constructive and helpful.

e) At the end of the entire activity, each group will take 10 minutes and record on chart paper at least three things they think are important for good interviewing (Conducting Interviews in the Community).

3. In large group:

a) Teacher will debrief with the whole group, asking each group to share one point from their chart paper. Teacher will write these notes on a transparency.

b) Teacher will then ask participants if they think this strategy would be useful for teaching interviewing in their schools (why and why not).

Guided Practice (30 min)

1. Teacher will ask participants to work with a small group of others from their school to identify ways interviewing could be included in the curriculum. Each school group will be asked to identify one potential use of interviewing for practical classes and one potential use for vocational classes in their school.

2. Teacher will bring group back together to share ideas developed during step one.

3. Teacher will discuss with participants how to evaluate performance. Explain to participants the overall goal of using the interview method is to help students become active learners and also develop skills and abilities, such as communication and presentation skills, problem solving, and decision-making. In general, interviews can be evaluated according to how well students communicated and gained information. They also can be evaluated as part of a larger project, such as an oral history project that will be described in a later activity.

4. Teacher will close demonstration activity by explaining that interviewing skills will be used in other parts of this module and in Module IV.

V. DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITY 3

Conducting, Analyzing, and Interpreting Research Using Oral History

Approximate time: 3 hrs. 30 min.

Overview:

This chart shows the steps in this lesson and the activities for each part.

SUMMARY OF ORAL HISTORIES
Phase I: Activate Background Knowledge • **Teacher invites the participants to recall** personal experience about their understanding of the term "history." • **Teacher finds out** how many of the participants suggested History topics, such as the lives and activities of everyday people. • **Teacher provides overview** or oral history projects.
Phase II: Constructing Meaning • **Teacher and participants recall as** much as they can about their early experiences in school. • **Participants develop** interview protocols. • **Participants interview** each other about their first three years of schooling. • **Participants analyze** interviews for common themes and experiences.
Phase III: Evaluate and Apply • **Participants discuss** in small groups the use of oral history projects in their content disciplines. • **Participants are asked** to think about how the technique can be used in their practice.

Objectives:

Participants will:

- Define "social history" and formulate questions about social history topics.
- Be able to conduct, analyze, and interpret research using the method of oral history.

- Experience and reflect on the following module themes:
  - ✓ Collaboration
  - ✓ Communication
  - ✓ Problem Solving/Decision making
  - ✓ Self-assessment
  - ✓ Critical Thinking
  - ✓ Research
  - ✓ Leadership

PHASE I: Activating Background Knowledge (15 minutes)

Individual brainstorming (recalling personal experience):

- Ask participants to write in 5 minutes topics they think of when they hear the word "history."
- Find out how many participants wrote down the topics such as: presidents, wars, and famous people/events. Find out how many suggested topics such as: family life, work, clothing, recreation, and school.
- Point out that different historians look at different topics within history.
- Ask participants to list sources that social historians use (such as: libraries; diaries; letters; songs; photographs; public records, including birth, marriage, and death certificates; artifacts, including tools and clothing; census information; and oral histories).
- Explain that oral history is a strategy for exploring social history. Tell participants that oral history projects are an attempt to capture a relatively recent period of history and social practice as seen through the eyes of individuals who were actually

involved. Oral history projects use interviews of people to construct an understanding of history. (See Appendix 3A)

PHASE II: Constructing Meaning (2 hours, 15 minutes)

- Inform participants that they will be completing a short oral history project in this workshop. The topic is "Early Education in Macedonia."

- Ask the participants what they remember about their first three years in school. Write key words from their responses on a flip chart or overhead transparency. ***Allow 15 minutes for this discussion***

- Instruct participants that next they will develop an "interview protocol," or a set of questions that they can use to interview individuals about their early experiences in school (see Appendix 3-B). As appropriate, provide example questions: What do you remember about your first teacher? What was it like to learn how to read? Put participants back in their groups. ***Allow 15 minutes to develop the protocol.***

- Instruct participants to find a partner from another group to conduct the oral history interview. These partners will take turns interviewing each other. Inform participants that under the best conditions, interviews should be taped, but since this is not possible during the workshop, they should take extensive notes during the interview. To begin, one of the partners assumes the role of interviewer and the other is to be interviewed. After the interviewer completes the interview (asking all questions on the interview protocol), the partners switch roles. ***Allow 30 minutes for each interview (one hour total).***

- After all interviews take place, participants return to their original groups to analyze their interviews. Instruct participants to look for common themes and experiences;

have one group member summarize the group's findings on flip chart paper. When each group has finished, the summaries should be taped to the walls. Allow time for participants to review the findings from each group, or have each group make a short report on their findings. ***Allow 30 minutes for the analysis and 15 minutes for the reports (45 minutes total).***

PHASE III: Evaluating and Applying Information (30 minutes)

- Have participants form groups by their teaching disciplines. Instruct them to conduct a discussion on the oral history topics:
    - Possible oral history projects for your discipline
    - Target group to be interviewed
    - Questions to be used in the oral history interviews
    - How the research using oral history will be analyzed and interpreted
    - How does the Oral History Strategy compare with their teaching practice
    - The strengths/limitations of the strategy
- Guide the discussion by asking the participants to anticipate how this technique will work in their own practice.
- Point out to participants that with their students it may be necessary to develop their students' background knowledge on oral history topics. This is particularly crucial when introducing the idea of oral history projects (Library of Congress Learning Page: *Using Oral Histories*).

Reviewing the activity (15 minutes)

Have the participants recall the steps of the activity. Questions that may be asked: "What was the first step?" "What we did next?" The participants may recall individually. in pairs, or as a group. Name the technique and write it on a transparency or a flip chart. Then, using the overhead projector or flip chart, review the whole procedure, focusing on the benefits of the strategy.

Guided Practice (30 minutes)

Organize the participants into groups by schools. Have each group brainstorm a possible oral history project for their school. The project should be something that a team of teachers from the school could collaborate on. Ask what kinds of projects would provide insights into their communities. Allow approximately 30 minutes. Then call the spoke person from each group to present the application activity.

VI. DEMONSTRATION ACTIVITY 4

Building School and Community Partnerships

Approximate time: 4 hrs. 45 minutes

Overview:

Reaching beyond school walls often helps students learn actively and meaningfully. Youth often find new insights, interests, and attitudes when they partner with community members. This Demonstration Activity introduces participants to a structured approach to initiating school and community partnerships. This activity differs from previous conventional literacy-based activities (e.g., RAFT, Double-entry Journals) because it describes a substantive approach to school structures and curriculums.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY FOR BUILDING SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

Phase I: Activating Background Knowledge (30 minutes)

- Participants form groups randomly or according to subject specialization.
- Teacher introduces school-community partnerships by having participants interpret and evaluate a proverb.
- Participants respond to two questions that tap prior knowledge of school-community partnerships.
- Teacher presents partnership benefits to students.

Phase II: Constructing Meaning (3 hours, 30 minutes)

- Participants form groups according to school or town.
- Teacher introduces the four steps of the IVAC approach: Investigate, Vision, Action, Change. (15 minutes)

Step 1: Investigate (60 minutes)

- Participants investigate possible partnerships by reading supplied materials and talking in groups. They brainstorm possibilities on chart paper.

- Teacher displays additional sources for possible partnerships available at local schools and towns.
- Teacher asks each group to report its work to the whole group.

Step 2: Vision (45 minutes)

- Participants form school-based groups.
- Participants respond orally in their groups to vision development questions relative to partnerships.
- Participants record vision statements on chart paper, then they display and describe them to the workshop.

Step 3: Action (60 minutes)

- Participants respond orally in their groups to action plan development questions relative to partnerships.
- Participants follow a template to record action plans on chart paper, then display and describe them to the workshop.

Step 4: Change (45 minutes)

- Participants brainstorm possible criteria for evaluating the changes that occur during school-community partnerships. Translator records suggestions on chart paper for the entire workshop.
- Participants then brainstorm possible indicators of success that might accompany each criterion. Translator again records suggestions on chart paper for the entire workshop.
- Teacher presents possible exhibits that portray the results of partnerships.

Phase III: Evaluating and Applying (30 minutes)

- Participants summarize this activity by responding to five questions.
- Participants explain how this activity addresses the modules' themes.

Objectives:

As a result of this activity participants will:

- Be able to explain the value of school-community partnerships.
- Be able to begin planning school-community partnerships.

- Experience and reflect on the following module themes:
  - ✓ Collaboration
  - ✓ Communication
  - ✓ Problem Solving/Decision making
  - ✓ Self-assessment
  - ✓ Critical Thinking
  - ✓ Research
  - ✓ Leadership

PHASE I: Activating Background Knowledge (30 minutes)

Begin by having participants form groups of about five individuals. The groups may be formed randomly or according to subject-matter specialization. (Do not form groups according to school or city because this formation occurs in Phase II.)

Display on an overhead (Appendix 4-A) and ask participants in their groups to interpret and evaluate the following proverb:

It takes a village to raise a child.

Collaboratively examine this proverb by having participants volunteer to the whole workshop their interpretations (What does the proverb mean?) and their evaluations (What is their opinion of the proverb?).

Then say: *"This demonstration activity is about school-community partnerships because many educators agree with the proverb's message. Many educators have found that reaching beyond school walls helps students learn actively and meaningfully. Youth often find new insights, interests, and attitudes when they partner with community members. School-community partnerships currently are quite common in the United States. For*

instance, one large school district in Phoenix. Arizona, attributes its students' high achievement to partnerships with more than 100 different community groups.

"As you read in Demonstration Activity #1, the term "community" refers to many overlapping groups that are not necessarily defined by geography. There are multiple communities within one town. This activity addresses school partnerships with all types of communities."

Now display on an overhead (Appendix 4-B) and have participants in their groups respond to the following questions:

Prior Knowledge of School-Community Partnerships

- What does building partnerships between schools and communities mean to you?
- What does your school currently do that directly involves community members?

After about five minutes of discussion, explain that the remainder of this demonstration activity provides information about school-community partnerships. Participants will respond to these questions again at the end of this activity, so we will not discuss their responses now as a large group.

Then display on an overhead (Appendix 4-C) and present to participants the benefits to students of school-community partnerships:

Benefits to Students of School-Community Partnerships

- Increased student engagement
- Increased understanding of students' communities
- Increased sense of empowerment as a citizen
- Overall scholastic improvement

- Attainment of higher-level thinking skills
- Greater interpersonal competence
- Exploration of various career pathways

Say: *"We will spend the remainder of this activity learning how to build school-community partnerships that produce these benefits for our students."*

PHASE II: Constructing Meaning

Ask participants to form groups according to their schools or towns.

Display on an overhead (Appendix 4-D) and say: *"A good way to involve students in school-community partnerships is to follow the IVAC approach, which consists of four steps* (Jensen 2004)."

IVAC Approach to Building School-Community Partnerships

(1) Investigate

(2) Vision

(3) Action

(4) Change

STEP 1: Investigate (1 hour)

Note: In Step 1: Investigate, participants research and brainstorm possible school-community partnerships.

Say: *"We now will work in groups on the first step of IVAC, which is I for investigate. We will explore the range of possible school-community partnerships. We will do this by (a) reading the materials you brought to this workshop;, (b) reading the materials the SEA office provided; and (c) talking with one another in groups."*

Present some of the materials and show their location.

Say: *"We now have about 45 minutes to investigate the materials and articles that are available to you as well as to talk among your group members. As a group, you will record on chart paper as many possible school-community partnerships as you can brainstorm."*

After about 45 minutes, close the small-group investigations, display the following overhead transparency, and say: *"When you return to your homes and schools, you might investigate school-community partnerships through resources such as the following that we did not have available here."* Show transparency from Appendix 4-E.

School-Community Partnership Resources

- ❑ Talk with key community members involved in areas such as:
  - business,
  - elementary school and college,
  - government,
  - senior citizen groups,
  - social service (e.g., crisis centers, child care, mental health), and
  - special interests (e.g., art, wildlife, science).
- ❑ Open a discussion forum for all members interested in partnerships.
- ❑ Read other newspapers, journal articles, and websites that shed light on possible partnerships.

Ask a spokesperson from each group to display and describe to the whole workshop the possible school-community partnerships they generated. Encourage other participants to ask questions and offer comments about the possibilities.

STEP 2: Vision (45 minutes)

Note: In Step 2: Vision, participants reduce and refine the partnership possibilities to what has the best chance of success in their particular communities.

Ask participants to form school-based groups.

Say: *"Having a clear vision of a school-community partnership plays a crucial role in inspiring commitment and action. The next step of the IVAC approach involves creating a vision about the most productive partnerships that are possible between your school and community. In this step you will think through how your school and community can best work together (Jensen & Simovska, 2003)."*

Display Appendix 4-F on an overhead and say: "*In order to create visions about ideal school-community partnerships, you should ask yourselves three questions."*

Vision Development Questions

- Of the partnership possibilities listed in Step 1, which are most likely to be accomplished?
- Of the partnership possibilities listed in Step 1, which are most likely to promote students' best interests?
- What two or three partnership possibilities do we most prefer and why? (Jensen, 2004)

Emphasize that participants should focus on identifying possible school-community partnerships that they believe to be best suited to their particular situations.

After about 15 minutes of answering the three questions above, have participants produce **vision statements** relative to their school-community partnerships. Vision statements express in a few words where people see themselves and others in the future. They

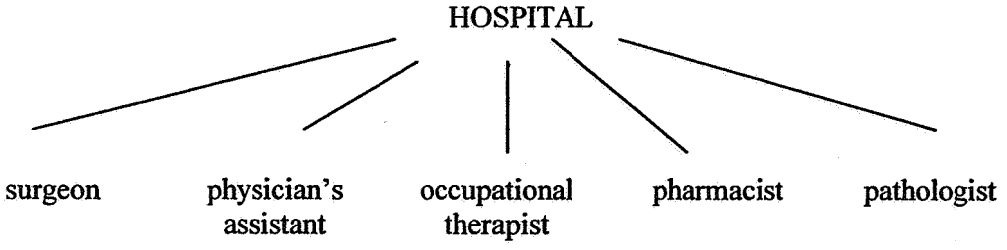
are signposts pointing in a certain direction rather than specific blueprints. They state the ultimate purpose or goal of the partnership *(Jensen & Simovska, 2003).*

Have participants express their school-community partnership vision statements on chart paper in prose, in drawings, or in graphic organizer form (e.g., flowcharts, tree diagrams, or outlines). For instance, a school might partner with a nearby hospital, so a vision statement expressing this partnership in prose might be something likes Appendix 4-G:

Sample Vision Statement

"Students will observe and be able to describe the roles and responsibilities of key health-care professionals in a hospital."

A graphic organizer added to the prose might look like this:



After about 15 minutes, ask participants to display their vision statements and have each group's spokesperson describe their vision statement to the entire workshop.

When all groups finish, collaboratively examine the similarities and differences of the statements, providing a critical yet supportive analysis.

STEP 3: Action - Action Plan (1 hour)

Note: In Step 3: Action - Action Plan, participants generate a plan for accomplishing their vision of a school-community partnership.

Have participants remain in their school-based groups.

Say: *"Once a vision, or goal, is established, you develop an action plan. Action planning involves deciding the steps needed to bring about change. Now you will begin to specify the ways in which the desired partnerships can be formed between your schools and communities."*

Display Appendix 4-H on an overhead and say: *"To begin planning actions that lead toward your vision of school-community partnerships, you should ask yourselves three questions."*

Action Plan Development Questions

- What changes are needed to accomplish our vision? (Changes within ourselves? Changes within our classrooms? Changes within our schools? Changes within our communities?)
- What barriers might prevent us from accomplishing our vision?
- What actions might we undertake to accomplish our vision? (Jensen, 2004)

After about 20 minutes of answering the three questions above, ask participants to produce action plans relative to their school-community partnerships. Action plans list actions, persons responsible, timelines, and provide blueprints to bring about change and accomplish visions (Sharon, 1996). They are the directions or instructions that people follow to accomplish something. They answer *what*, *who*, and *when* questions.

Have participants record their action plans on chart paper according to the Action Plan Template displayed on Appendix 4-I.

Action Plan Template

WHAT actions are needed to accomplish our vision?	WHO is responsible for carrying out each action?	WHEN will the action be completed?

After about 20 minutes, have participants display their action plans. Then have each group's spokesperson describe their plan to the entire workshop. Say: *"When presenting your action plan, you might mention how your actions overcome some of the major barriers to your visions of school-community partnerships."*

When all groups are finished, collaboratively examine the similarities and differences of the plans, providing a critical yet supportive analysis.

Say: *"Taking action to achieve our visions of school-community partnerships is clearly a complicated long-term process. When following action plans for school-community partnerships, leadership is critical. In the United States a school-level* ***coordinator*** *and a* ***steering committee*** *are typically designated to initiate and maintain such partnerships.*

However, school colleagues who participate in designing vision statements and action plans like we have just done usually increase their commitment to the success of the program."

STEP 4: Change (45 minutes)

Note: In the last stage (Step 4: Change) participants work on how to evaluate the change that occurs during school-community partnerships.

Say: *"This last stage of the IVAC process centers on self-evaluation of change. Educators, students, and community members should have a means to evaluate their effectiveness in carrying out the changes required by their partnership. At this point, we need to develop criteria and indicators of success for our partnerships.*

"Recall the presentation of lesson planning and assessments from Module I that called for us to establish criteria for success. For instance, assessments of students' writing often include criteria such as ideas, organization, and word choice. Educators and students evaluate writing according to these criteria.

"Now think about the partnerships we have proposed during this activity. What criteria are appropriate for determining their success? What should we examine when evaluating these partnerships?"

Ask participants to form pairs and brainstorm criteria for about five minutes. Then have a translator record a few possible criteria on an overhead transparency or chart paper.

After recording a few criteria, have participants brainstorm indicators of success for each. Say: *"When we use organization as a criterion for evaluating a piece of writing, we specify indicators of success relative to it. For instance, we look for beginnings that produce*

clear expectations, middles that present ideas logically, and closings that ties up loose ends. What would we look for if we use (_____-[select any criterion from the brainstormed list]) as a criterion for evaluating our partnership?"

Collaboratively examine a few criteria as well as potential indicators of success to illustrate this process.

Conclude by advising that in the future colleagues should produce criteria and indicators of success so that everyone can monitor their school-community partnerships.

Finally, explain to participants that students together with teachers and community members also can present what was accomplished in their partnership. This is part of the evaluation-of-change process.

Display Appendix 4-J on an overhead and say: "*Students can exhibit the results of their partnerships many ways. As the overhead shows, they can ...*"

Partnership Exhibits

- Create products such as posters, photos, flyers, and display them in the school and in community centers such as markets or other public places.
- Organize conferences or panel debates for peers, teachers, and community members, and present the results of partnership projects.
- Write articles or letters to school newsletters and local newspapers.
- Create a webpage summarizing the work on community action projects and including relevant links that could be used as an educational resource.

PHASE III: Evaluating and Applying (30 minutes)

In this phase participants reflect on the process of building school-community partnerships. Ask participants to respond to the following questions either in writing or orally, in small groups or in the whole workshop:

Display Appendix 4-K and say: *"Now let's take a few minutes to review the process of building school-community partnerships according the IVAC approach. Please respond to the following questions:"*

1. Summarize this activity:

- What does building partnerships between schools and communities mean to you?
- What are the benefits of school-community partnerships to students?
- What are the benefits of school-community partnerships to community members?
- What do the letters *IVAC* represent?
- What is accomplished in each step: Investigate, Vision, Action, and Change?

2. How do school-community partnerships promote students' development of each of the modules' themes?

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Problem Solving/Decision Making
- Self-assessment
- Critical Thinking
- Research
- Leadership

VII. APPENDIX

Appendix 1-A

Expectation/Reaction Guide for Teacher-Selected Material

1. (Statement for consideration)

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

2. (Statement for consideration)

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

3. (Statement for consideration)

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

4. (Statement for consideration)

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

5. (Statement for consideration)

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

6. (Statement for consideration)

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

Appendix 1-B

Expectation/Reaction Guide for Understanding and Describing the Community

1. Teachers need to learn about the communities where they teach.

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ _____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

2. The term "community" refers only to a group of people who live in a particular geographic area.

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ _____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

3. To understand a community, you need to know the attitudes people in the community have toward each other.

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

4. To completely understand a community, you should know its weaknesses.

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

5. Communities seldom change.

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

6. Residents should be involved in making decisions about new school programs that may be implemented in their communities.

Before reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

After reading:

Agree Disagree

____ ____

Reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with this idea. _____

_____

_____

Appendix 1-C

Understanding and Describing the Community

Chris Hampton and Catie Heaven; Edited by Jerry Schultz and Marya Axner

For those of us who work to improve communities, such as in the fields of education, health, and development, it's important to have a good understanding of the particular communities we work with, and also what it takes to make a community in the first place. Taking the time to get to know your community is crucial.

Why is it crucial? Because anything you do in a community will require that you are familiar with the people, the issues, and the history of the community. For example, you can't teach children of the community unless you know something about the families from which they come and their backgrounds; you can't set up a drug prevention program if you don't know something about the history of the community and about its different cultural groups. And you can't build a coalition to help homeless people unless you already have relationships established with the organizations that already do work with homeless people.

What is a community?

While we traditionally think of a community as meaning the people in a given geographical location, it can really mean any group sharing something in common. Most often what we share with others is:

locale: for example, my city, Obedkovo

experience: for example, I am Macedonian

interest: for example, my background in educational issues

Each of these might form a community.

Example: Communities within a community

In the fictional city of Obedkovo, here are a few of the communities present:

the faith community

the arts community

the Asian Indian community

the education community

the business community

the homeless community

the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered community

the medical community

the Turkish community

the elderly community

...and of course, Obedkovo itself can be referred to as a community.

There is not just one community present, but many overlapping communities, not necessarily defined by geography. For example, say you are a retired teacher—you might consider yourself to be a part of the elderly community, the education community, and of your neighborhood community. A Caucasian woman who is married to an Asian Indian man may become very involved in the area Asian Indian community, even though she's not Asian Indian herself. There are also many different levels of community—from neighborhoods up to entire cities or even regions. Whichever community defines your work, you will want to get to know it well.

Why do you need to get to know your community?

Beyond simply being able to name the particular community you're working with, it is very valuable to learn as much as possible about it. Types of communities can vary widely in terms of size, political power and savvy, education level, and other factors that are crucial to know about if you're going to be working with them. For example, the neighborhoods in

one town may be well informed and politically powerful, but polarized on many issues; in another town people may be under informed and disorganized, but richly diverse and vibrant.

Getting to know a community entails getting to know the people there, the activities they engage in, and where these activities take place. Knowing these basic bits of information can tell you a lot about who connects with each other, the types of relationships people have, and the types of material resources people have or need. By asking questions of people about these situations, you can begin to understand the feelings, attitudes, and values people have towards each other, and why. Understanding feelings, attitudes, and values is key to any community building effort your initiative undertakes.

This information is also useful in determining needs and resources in communities. It can help you identify who might be allies in your advocacy activities, lay the groundwork for recruiting volunteers, provide information for fundraising, or help to understand who might oppose your efforts and why. Knowing the community as thoroughly as possible is fundamental to everything that you do.

Writing up a detailed description of it is one good way to give yourself a comprehensive overview of the community presently and what kind of potential there is for change in the future.

Some advantages in taking the time to write a community description include:

- To capture unspoken, influential rules and norms. For example, if people are particularly divided and angry on a particular initiative, writing a detailed description of the community might uncover something in the community's history that explains the strong emotions on that subject.

- To develop a richer understanding than you would from a less descriptive and detailed method of gathering information, such as a survey.

- To get a feel for the attitudes and opinions of the community when you're starting work on an initiative.

- To take stock of the strengths that exist, as well as the shortcomings that need to be addressed to make a difference.

- When you're new to a community and want to be well informed before beginning your work. If you've just started working in a community—even if it's work you've been doing for years—you will probably find that taking the time to write a community description enriches your work.

- When you've been working in a community for any length of time and want to take stock. Communities are complex, constantly-changing entities. By periodically stopping to write a detailed description of your community, you can assess what approaches have worked and what haven't; new needs that have developed over time and old concerns that no longer require your effort and energy; and other information to help you better do your work. This is also useful when you're feeling like you're stuck in a rut and need a fresh perspective.

- When you're considering introducing a new initiative or program and want to assess its possible success. Aside from when you first come to a community, this is probably the most vital time to do a community description.

Example:

You work with an inner city community development coalition and you want to get the city to increase police patrols in a high-crime neighborhood. By doing a detailed community description, you find that some years ago, there was an incidence of police brutality that later resulted in a small-scale civil disturbance happened in the area where you're hoping to increase the patrols.

As a result, residents in the area tend to be distrustful and suspicious of police, and the police are reluctant to increase patrols in the area as well. Knowing this information, you do additional work to improve police-community relationships in the neighborhood, thus assuring more cooperation from both residents and police when the patrols are finally increased.

While writing a community description can be a time-consuming process, your work can almost always benefit from the information you gather. In the next section we provide details on how to proceed with writing the description and what to include.

Adapted from Schultz, J. & Marva Axner (Eds.). Hampton, C. & Heaven, C. *Understanding and describing the community.* Retrieved August 4, 2004, from Community Tool Box. http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/sub_section_main_1020.htm

Appendix 1-D

Questions About Expectation-Reaction Guide

Questions we can ask about the Expectation-Reaction Guide:

- *How does this strategy help to prepare students for reading?*
- *How does this strategy contribute to the goal of self-questioning?*
- *How does this strategy help to encourage engaged reading?*
- *What is the value of working individually on the questions before reading?*
- *What is the value of reviewing the questions again after reading?*
- *What is the value of comparing answers with a partner or group before and after reading?*
- *What kinds of reading material lend itself best to this type of activity?*

Appendix 2-A

Interview Sheet

Questions	Notes

Appendix 2-B

Steps to Teach Students Who Will Be Conducting Informational Interviews

1. *Identify the issue you wish to learn about.* Assess your own interest, abilities, and skills. Discuss the project with your teacher, fellow students, and parents. There are many good topics. A topic may be related to a course you are studying, it may inform you about your community, or it may help you learn more about job or educational opportunities. Work with others to identify important and interesting topics.

2. *Prepare for the interview.* Read all you can about the field or issue prior to the interview. Decide what information you would like to obtain. Prepare a list of questions that you would like to have answered. Remember to ask questions that have more than a "yes" or "no" answer. Develop questions that ask for the interviewee's ideas and opinions.

3. *Identify people to interview.* Start with the people you already know such as family friends, relatives, fellow students, parents, supervisors, teachers, principals, and school workers.

4. *Contact the person to set up an interview:*

   - by telephone or email,
   - by a letter followed by a telephone call, or
   - by having someone who knows the person make the appointment for you.

5. *On the day of the interview:*

   - Dress appropriately.
   - Arrive on time.
   - Be polite and professional.
   - Refer to your list of prepared questions.

- Take notes.
- Stay on track, but allow for spontaneous discussion.
- Before leaving, ask your contact to suggest names of others who might be helpful to you.
- Ask permission to use your contacts' name when contacting these new contacts.

6. *After the interview:*

- Bring your notes to school and write a summary of the interview.
- Share the information you learned with others.
- Be sure to send a thank you note to your contact within one week.

Adapted from: Informational Interviewing. Retrieved July 28, 2004 from http:/danenet.wicip.org/jets/jet-9407-p.html

Appendix 2-C

Example Interview Questions

Examples of questions that can be asked in interviews of teachers or principals.

(Please note the students could ask similar questions in interviews with employers in the community.)

Describe the school and roles in the school:

- Characteristics of the student population and community
- Availability of technology for classroom use
- Typical class size
- Number of administrators in the building and their responsibilities
- Number of new teachers hired each year
- Students clubs, organizations, and sports
- Social worker, librarian, and other support staff and their roles
- Community support for education
- Involvement in projects and their role
- Services that are available for students with disabilities
- Age and history of the school

Opinion questions related to the school or their role:

- What do you think makes a good school?
- Do you enjoy your job? Why or why not?
- Do you expect changes in your school in years to come?
- How are parents involved in the school?
- What was your happiest moment as a principal/teacher? What was your saddest moment?

- What is the single most important quality a principal/teacher should have and why?
- Describe your approach for student behavior management.
- How will you promote new curriculum and instruction initiatives at the school?
- What advice would you give to new teachers?
- Would you advise secondary school students to study to become teachers or principals? Why or why not?

Appendix 3-A

Oral History in the Teaching of U.S. History by Carl R. Siler

Oral history is a stimulating classroom activity and an exciting process designed to increase student involvement in a United States history class and improve student understanding of the historical topic. Further, oral history involves students directly in a method of historical inquiry, which includes the organization and presentation of data acquired directly from another person.

Why have students conduct an oral history project?

An oral history project, regardless of the historical topic being investigated or its duration, helps students understand all phases of designing, implementing, and completing an activity. Students of all learning and comprehension levels can use the oral history process to increase their active involvement in the study of United States history.

An oral history project is an attempt to preserve a small segment of a relatively recent historical period as viewed through the eyes, experiences, and memories of people who lived during that time. Capturing their experiences and memories on either video or audio tape is invaluable. Over a period of time, memories can fade and those feelings or emotions associated with the events can easily be lost or altered by time.

An oral history project involving local participants is an exciting method of providing students the opportunity to "experience" history firsthand, which makes the learning of United States history a more valuable experience and places local history within the overall context of United States history. Participants are eager to share their experiences with

students. Students are enthralled to hear the stories of the participants and usually cannot wait to share them with the rest of the class.

Oral history projects add to the collective knowledge of local and national history, because such projects document citizens' participation and memories concerning a specific event or time period. Students begin to understand that United States history is not simply a series of isolated events from the pages of a textbook, but rather it is composed of life experiences and memories of many Americans just like themselves. Students learn that history is in essence the collective memories of actual events that have directly affected the lives of their friends, acquaintances, and relatives.

What instructional goals are met by conducting an oral history project?

An oral history project has a multitude of instructional goals for the students. Students will increase their understanding of a specific historical event. First-person information about any historical event makes it much more relevant to their lives. Students will create and administer various interview instruments. They must pilot the interview instrument to better understand that various questions may elicit unanticipated, unexpected, and unintended answers.

The selection of the participants will result in comprehension of the dynamics of time, continuity, and change among age groups.

Students will improve their questioning skills as they ask the various questions and follow-up questions of the "what" variety, and the probing questions of "how" and "why." Students will improve their writing skills as they become cognizant of how people use their language skills. Students will enhance their listening skills by accurately listening to what was said, and by listening for how and why the person being interviewed chose to describe an

event as he/she did. Students will gain organizational skills pertaining to their use of time, energy, and information. Finally, the students' proofreading skills will be enhanced as they read and reread their final product to insure accuracy.

What topics can be used for an oral history project?

Various topics involving events that are national, state, or local in scope and importance can be used for an oral history project.

Students need to be aware of the dynamics of age and time as they select a historical period. If students select a topic involving the Depression or World War II, they must remember that the participants to be interviewed typically are 65 years of age or older. However, a topic such as the assassination of JFK or the Vietnam War could involve participants as young as 40. The potential pool of participants can be affected by the topic chosen. The level of recollective ability and historical accuracy also can dramatically be affected by the age of the participants being interviewed. Hence, the selection of participants is a critical component for an effective oral history project. Students will soon discover that some participants are simply better interviewees than others. Students will usually approach relatives or friends as their first potential interviewees and then expand their pool of people to be interviewed.

An oral history project can be as simple as a student interviewing one person, writing the responses of the participant, and reporting those survey responses to the class. Another project could involve audio- or videotaping of the participant and the student composing a written account of the dialogue. But a more sophisticated and encompassing oral history project could involve the entire class during a semester or school year. The class would

conduct taped interviews throughout the school year, type the dialogue of the interviews, and print the results in a book format. The culmination of the year's project would be to publish the interviews and make the books available to interviewees, students, libraries, and interested individuals in the community.

What is involved in the process of conducting an oral history project?

The oral history project is a process-oriented activity. The students are responsible for the entire project. It is imperative that students have adequate background knowledge of the historical topic and time period before interviewing the participants. Good content knowledge will enhance their understanding of the historical topic or era and vastly improve their questioning skills; thereby, they will have a better understanding of the person being interviewed.

Students must design the interview instrument focusing on questions that will elicit much more information than merely "yes" or "no" answers. Practice interviews must be conducted to test the interview instrument, which allows students to practice their interview skills and insures the validity of the questions and answers. Students will learn that some questions simply do not ask what was intended.

Students select their own participants to be interviewed and set up an interview time, which helps to enhance their organizational skills. Interviews can be conducted during school time or on the student's time, whatever is convenient for both the student and the participant. It is imperative that the student obtain from the interviewee a signed release form giving the class and the school the right to publish the oral interview. This is important because of the legalities involved in publishing an interview.

All interviews are done with audio or video tape, and typewritten transcripts are made by the students from the recordings. This element of the process takes a considerable amount of time. Students proofread their own material, as well as other students' material, to ensure spelling accuracy, historical accuracy, and common formatting.

The final copy can be printed at school, and the school printing department can usually produce multiple copies. Hard-cover bookbinding can be commercially obtained, or soft-cover binding can be done at any instant copy business.

It is imperative that the teacher keep students on task and on schedule with such an oral history project because as the end of the school year approaches, finishing a project of this magnitude can be overwhelming. A convenient timeline is presented below:

- Introduction of Project and Investigation of Event—September
- Creation of Interview Instrument—September
- Interviewing of Participants—October through March
- Transcribing of Tapes—October through March
- Typing of Rough Draft—October through March
- Proofreading and Finalization of Document or Book—April
- Final Copies to Printer and Binder—May through June

The finished product of such an oral history project is a published book that focuses on a particular topic in United States history encompassing the memories and experiences of local participants. An oral history project, regardless of the topic, grade, or academic level of the students, or sophistication of the final product, is an extremely rewarding experience for the students, participants, and classroom teacher. Because a variety of teaching methodologies and strategies is a vital component of any successful United States history class, an oral history project can be a significant instrument for success. A project of this extent enhances students'

understanding of any historical era and improves the quality of teacher instruction. Students will realize through an oral history project that historical events affect the lives of people they know and love. Years after the students have left the classroom they are more likely to remember the oral history project than other aspects of their United States history class.

Adapted from ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). ERIC Digest (ED3937810)

Appendix 3-B

Guidelines for Preparing and Conducting Interviews

Questions to Ask

Before conducting an interview, plan the questions you want to ask. Start by reviewing the three research questions your group wants to answer. Then, write down at least ten interview questions to gather information about the research topic you are studying. Think of things people can tell you about their first-hand experiences with your research topic. Write questions that will require more than a *Yes* or *No* answer. For example, the second question will get better results than the first:

- ✓ Did you have chores to do as a child?
- ✓ Tell me about the chores you had to do as a child.

When your list of questions is complete, role-play with your interview questions. Are the questions clear and easy to understand? Do the questions give you the answers you are looking for?

Finding Someone to Interview

You must be prepared with ideas for people to interview. For example, if your research topic is women's work in the 1940s and 1950s, you would want to interview women (although a man who supervised women workers might provide useful information). You would also need to interview someone old enough to have worked in the 1940s and 1950s. Relatives and neighbours can be good interview subjects. Places that may be helpful in

locating interview subjects are senior centers, retirement homes. or community organizations related to your research topic.

Recording the Interview

Working in pairs allows one person to ask the questions and the other to take notes and operate a tape recorder if one is used. Before you get to an interview, make sure you that have a blank cassette and that the tape recorder is working. Label the tape with the date and topic of your interview, and the name of your interview subject. You will want to have your list of questions with you, and spare paper so you can write ideas for follow-up questions as the person is talking.

When your interview questions are written, your equipment checked, and your interview scheduled, go ahead and conduct the interview.

From: Library of Congress Learning Page: *Using Oral Histories*. Retrieved April 29, from http://www. memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/oralhist/ohhome.html

Appendix 3-C

Conducting the Interview

Interview Manners

Here are some pointers for good interview manners:

- Be on time.
- Be prepared. Have your questions ready, your notebook out, and your equipment in good working order.
- Be polite and address people formally (such as Dr., Mr., Mrs., Ms., Miss).
- Provide time for the person to answer questions. Be patient when answers take a long time.
- Do not argue with or correct the subject. Oral histories are not always accurate. But they do provide important information about feelings and impressions.
- After the interview, send a thank you letter to the subject.

Getting Started

1. Introduce yourself. Give your name, age, the class, and school you attend. Describe the research project your group has chosen.
2. Ask your interview subject if you can tape record the conversation. Have the subject sign a release form so you can share the information you collect with others.
3. Begin the interview by asking where and when the interview subject was born.
4. If your subject strays from the topic, try to refocus by asking one of your prepared questions.

Asking Follow-up Questions

Listen carefully while your subject is talking. Often, what a person says may suggest a follow-up question that will produce interesting information. For example, if your subject mentions the influence of his or her high school teacher, you might follow up by asking about the teacher. Such as: Why did the teacher have a strong influence on the interview subject? What made the person a good teacher? Did you keep in contact with the teacher?

Write down follow-up questions as your interview subject speaks. That way, you can ask the follow-up questions at a pause in the interview, without interrupting your interview subject's train of thought.

When your interviews are complete, go ahead to After the Interview.

From: Library of Congress Learning Page: *Using Oral Histories*. Retrieved April 29, from http://www. memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/oralhist/ohhome.html

Appendix 3-D

After the Interview

Transcribing the Interview Tape

Listen to the tape of your interview. Transcribe (write down or type) the contents of the tape or the most important parts of the tape. You may need to listen to the tape many times as you transcribe what is said. When you are finished transcribing, think about the accuracy of what your subject said. Did you hear contradictory information or indications that the person did not remember an event well?

Analyzing the Interview

Think about your research topic. Did your oral history interview help answer those questions? Write some tentative summaries of your research results. Decide how your group will present these findings to the class. Remember that your presentation should be brief.

Before making your presentation, think about additional information you need to feel confident about answers to your questions. Check the accuracy of the information you gathered in other sources before you summarize your research results for the class.

Library of Congress Learning Page: *Using Oral Histories*. Retrieved April 29, from http://www. memory.loc.gov/learn/lessons/oralhist/ohhome.html

Appendix 4-A

Proverb Discussion

It takes a village to raise a child.

Appendix 4-B

Partnerships Discussion

Prior Knowledge of School-Community Partnerships

- **What does building partnerships between schools and communities mean to you?**

- **What does your school currently do that directly involves community members?**

Appendix 4-C

Benefits of Partnerships Discussion

Benefits to Students of School-Community Partnerships

- **Increased student engagement**
- **Increased understanding of students' communities**
- **Increased sense of empowerment as a citizen**
- **Overall scholastic improvement**
- **Attainment of higher-level thinking skills**
- **Greater interpersonal competence**
- **Exploration of various career pathways**

Appendix 4-D

IVAC Method

IVAC Steps to Building

School-Community Partnerships

1. **Investigate**
2. **Vision**
3. **Action plan**
4. **Change**

Appendix 4-E

Partnership Resources

School-Community Partnership Resources

- **Talk with key community members involved in areas such as:**
  - **business,**
  - **elementary school and college,**
  - **government,**
  - **senior citizen groups,**
  - **social services (e.g., crisis centers, child care, mental health), and**
  - **special interests (e.g., art, wildlife, science).**
- **Open a discussion forum for all members interested in partnerships.**
- **Read other newspapers, journal articles, and websites that shed light on possible partnerships.**

Appendix 4-F

Vision Questions

Vision Development Questions

- **Of the partnership possibilities listed in Step 1, which are most likely to be accomplished?**

- **Of the partnership possibilities listed in Step 1, which are most likely to promote students' best interests?**

- **What two or three partnership possibilities do we most prefer and why?**

Appendix 4-G

Sample Vision

Sample Vision Statement

"Students will be able to describe the roles and responsibilities of key health-care professionals in a hospital."

A graphic organizer added to the prose might look like this:

surgeon **physician's assistant** **occupational therapist** **pharmacist** **pathologist**

Appendix 4-H

Action Plan Questions

Action Plan Development Questions

- **What changes are needed to accomplish our vision?**
  - **Changes within ourselves?**
  - **Changes within our classrooms?**
  - **Changes within our schools?**
  - **Changes within our communities?**
- **What barriers might prevent us from accomplishing our vision?**
- **What actions might we undertake to accomplish our vision?**

Appendix 4-I

Action Plan Template

WHAT actions are needed to accomplish our vision?	WHO is responsible for carrying out each action?	WHEN will the action be completed?

Appendix 4-J

Partnership Exhibits

- **Create products such as posters, photos, flyers, and display them in the school and in community centers such as markets or other public places.**

- **Organize conferences or panel debates for peers, teachers and community members, and present the results of partnership projects.**

- **Write articles or letters to school newsletters and local newspapers.**

- **Create a webpage summarizing the work on community action projects and including relevant links which could be used as an educational resource.**

Appendix 4-K

Activity Review

1. Summarize this activity:

- **What does building partnerships between schools and communities mean to you?**
- **What are the benefits of school-community partnerships to students?**
- **What are the benefits of school-community partnerships to community members?**
- **What do the letters of *IVAC* represent?**
- **What is accomplished in each step: Investigate, Vision, Action, and Change?**

2. How do school-community partnerships promote students' development of each of the modules' themes?

- **Collaboration**
- **Communication**
- **Problem Solving/Decision Making**
- **Self-assessment**
- **Critical Thinking**
- **Research**
- **Leadership**

VIII. EVALUATION QUESTIONS

At the end of each day of the workshop, ask the following questions:

Evaluation Questions for End of Demonstration Activities Each Day

1. How can you use the strategies you have learned today to promote active teaching in your classroom?

2. What questions do you have about the strategies you have learned today?

Evaluation Questions for End of Entire Workshop

1. What in the workshop was most valuable to you?
2. What questions or concerns do you have related to applying of these strategies?

3. What would you change to make this workshop more meaningful?
4. What will change in your teaching as a result of this workshop?
5. What was your overall impression of the workshop?

   1 2 3 4 5 (1 = little value to 5 = great value)

6. Suggest topics that you would be interested in discussing in future workshops.
7. Please make any comments you wish about the workshop.

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